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## NEWS ITEMS

In the March-April number of *Torreya* the printer made it appear that Dr. Francis W. Pennell was in Columbia, S. C. Dr. Pennell is continuing the study of the flora of the high Andes of Colombia, South America, that he began in the fall of 1917. With him is Dr. Ellsworth P. Killip of the U. S. National Museum. The expedition was sent out by the New York Botanical Garden, the Gray Herbarium of Harvard, the Academy of Natural Science of Philadelphia and the United States National Museum.

Dr. John K. Small has just returned to the New York Botanical Garden from two months of study and exploration in Florida, continuing his previous investigations of the flora under the patronage of Mr. Charles Deering.

The May number of the *American Forester* contains an article on Our Vanishing Wild Flowers by Winthrop Packard. The article, which is accompanied by excellent photographs of some of the most attractive of our wild flowers, is a plea for the protection of the flowers.

Sir Isaac Bayley Balfour. The announcement has just been made of the retirement of the eminent keeper of the Edinburgh Botanical Garden and Professor of Botany in the University of Edinburgh. In this muddled world, with all its conflicts and misunderstandings, it is easy to lose faith in the capacity of mankind for decent civilization. In such moments of pessimism, it is worth a good deal to have seen such a man as Professor Bayley Balfour. Possessing seemingly equal abilities for botanical research, teaching, and administration, together with unbounded enthusiasm and untiring energy, he more than maintained the already very high traditions of Scottish botany. Doing this he also won the full support and esteem of his fellow citizens.—T. D. A. Cockerell.

The hairy Solomon's seal, *Polygonatum biflorum*, with slender stems and twin flowers, was just coming into bloom

in the southern foothills of the Catskills on May 15 at elevations below 1000 feet. One of the largest and thickest patches I ever saw was found on a rocky knoll at Yama Farms, near Ellenville, growing in shallow soil on a great mass of Lower Devonian sandstone partly shaded by small scrub oaks.—W. A. Murrill.